



**Contracting authority:** European Commission

Local Authorities: Partnerships for sustainable cities  
2020

**Guidelines for grant applicants**

Budget line(s): BGUE-B2019-21.020802-C1-DEVCO

Reference:

EuropeAid/167744/DH/ACT/Multi

Deadline for submission<sup>1</sup> of concept notes:

**27/03/2020 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)**

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)<sup>2</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see Section 2.2.2). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except for public holidays). Applicants should take note of the weekly maintenance hours mentioned in the PROSPECT user manual.

<sup>2</sup> An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>

# NOTICE

**These guidelines are published in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. In case of any discrepancy between the linguistic versions of this call, the English version will prevail.**

This is a restricted call for proposals. In the first instance, only concept notes (Part A of the grant application form) must be submitted for evaluation. Thereafter, lead applicants who have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application. After the evaluation of the full applications, an eligibility check will be performed for those which have been provisionally selected. Eligibility will be checked on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority and the signed 'declaration by the lead applicant' sent together with the full application.

**To apply to this call for proposals organisations must register in PADOR and submit their application in PROSPECT (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines).** The aim of PROSPECT is to increase the efficiency of the management of the call for proposals and to offer a better service to civil society organisations through a new panel of functionalities such as the on-line submission and the possibility to follow up online the status of their application.

**Preparation:** To help applicants familiarise themselves with the system before the online submission, an information session will be organised on **17/02/2020 at 12:30** at the External Cooperation INFOPOINT, 43 Rue de la Loi - 1040 Brussels, Belgium.

The recording of the Information Session will be available at the following link: <https://webcast.ec.europa.eu/infopoint-lunchtime-conference-local-authorities-partnerships-for-sustainable-cities>

Should you be interested in this session, please send an email by to [europaaid-167744@ec.europa.eu](mailto:europaaid-167744@ec.europa.eu) indicating: name, surname, nationality and email address of the persons who are going to participate as well as their organisation (max. two participants per organisation). No costs incurred by the applicants for attending this information session are reimbursable.

All organisations may find more information regarding PROSPECT [users' manual](#) and [the e-learning videos](#). You may also contact our technical support team via the online support form in PROSPECT<sup>3</sup>.

A functional mailbox specifically dedicated to this call has been set up:

**[europaaid-167744@ec.europa.eu](mailto:europaaid-167744@ec.europa.eu)**

It shall be used exclusively for sending clarification requests within the deadlines set in paragraph 2.2 of these guidelines, no other functional mailbox will be used. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to close this mail box without prior notice once this call for proposals is closed and not to reply to requests which do not fall under one of the afore-mentioned category.

**Concept notes or full applications submitted via this mailbox and any other mailbox will not be considered.**

<sup>3</sup> If PROSPECT is unavailable, the IT support can also be reached via email: [EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu)

# IMPORTANT

Even though the verification of eligibility is foreseen to be carried out only for the provisionally selected applicants at the end of the procedure, the Evaluation Committee may decide to verify this point at any previous step of the procedure. Consequently, any proposal found to be non-compliant with all the mandatory conditions set in these guidelines can be automatically rejected on that sole basis, at any stage of the procedure and without any prior notice or clarification request. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to fill in scrupulously the "Check List for Concept Note" (Part A of the grant application form) and the "Checklist for the Full Application form" (Part B of the grant application form). Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declarations and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the proposal on that sole basis.

**Please note that all information encoded in PROSPECT must be exhaustive and in line with the content of the concept note / full application. The administrative check will be performed taking into consideration only the information available in PROSPECT in sections: 1 – ‘Contact’, 2 – ‘Project’, 3 – ‘Co- applicants’, 4 - Documents. Please make sure that there are no inconsistencies between the information in PROSPECT and the content of the concept note / full application.**

**Complaints about administrative rejections related to this kind of inconsistencies will not be considered and will not lead to a modification of the decision.**

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## 1. LOCAL AUTHORITIES: PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE CITIES (2020)

### 1.1. BACKGROUND

In November 2018, a first call for proposals for a total amount of 53 million euro was launched. The objective of the first call for Proposals was to promote integrated urban development through partnerships built among Local Authorities of the EU Member States and of partner countries in accordance with the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development. The specific objectives were 4 folds: i) to strengthen urban governance; ii) to ensure social inclusiveness of cities; iii) to improve resilience and greening of cities; iv) to improve prosperity and innovation in cities. The Call contained four lots divided into geographical areas: Sub-Saharan Africa; Asia and the Pacific; Latin America, Central America and the Caribbean; and Neighbourhood South and East<sup>4</sup>.

The present call for proposals follows the same approach of the 2018 one, with some additional elements (see below the objectives of the call).

In order to coordinate the projects financed under the two *Partnership for sustainable cities* calls for proposals (the one published in 2018 and the one described in the present guidelines) two support programmes will be launched during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2020:

- A **Coordination Support programme** aiming at promoting knowledge sharing and capitalization of best practices, fostering synergies between the different components of the partnerships, as well as supporting DEVCO services to build in house knowledge about the partnership. The support contract will also be in charge of organizing the annual *Coordination Committee meeting* in Brussels.
- A **Communication and audio-visual support** contract aiming at creating a visual identity of the programme as well as producing videos promoting the objectives of the programme.

### 1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND PRIORITY ISSUES

This call for proposals is divided in **four geographic** lots and **two horizontal** lots:

#### **Geographic lots**



**Lot 1: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Lot 2: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Asia and the Pacific**

**Lot 3: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Lot 4: Partnerships for sustainable cities in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood**

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<sup>4</sup> The terms of reference of the 1<sup>st</sup> call for proposals is available online: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome&nbPubliList=15&orderby=upd&orderbyad=Desc&searchtype=RS&aofr=161146>

## **Horizontal lots**



### **Lot 5: Partnerships for sustainable towns**

For this lot, the maximum size, population wise, of European local authorities is set at 150.000 inhabitants and 300.000 inhabitants for Partner countries.

### **Lot 6: Partnerships for sustainable cities in fragile countries**<sup>5</sup>

The 15 “extremely fragile” countries included in the OCDE list are eligible for lot 6.

**Applicants must clearly specify under which lot they are submitting the application in their project title.**

**The global objective** of this Call for Proposals is to promote integrated urban development through partnerships built among Local Authorities of the EU Member States and of partner countries in accordance with the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development.

Partnerships will support Local Authorities from partner countries to address sustainable urban development through capacity building and service-delivery. Peer to peer exchanges of Local Authorities are at the heart of this approach. Actions could support the building of new partnerships or contribute to upscale long-lasting partnerships and cooperation relations.

The new political priorities of the EU, and notably the “New Green Deal”, will be taken into account by raising the importance of sustainability enhancement in the different specific objectives.

**The specific objectives** of this Call for Proposals are:

- 1) **Strengthen urban governance:** Continued promotion of good urban governance and the necessary policy and legal frameworks at national-government level (e.g. national urban policy) is essential to allow local authorities in the developing world to effectively implement national urban policies. In order to foster a system of multi-level governance (governance at national, regional and urban/local levels), local authorities’ role as autonomous policy makers, in line with the principle of subsidiarity should be promoted. Building such a system requires political will from all levels of government. The articulation of multiple governance levels is also an important factor for the effectiveness of sustainable landscape management, which is needed to reduce cities’ impacts on the surrounding ecosystems, and to allow these to continue providing essential services to urban populations. At city-level, this includes a territorial approach to local development allowing municipalities to take the lead in deciding what policy measures to take and how to implement them, while consulting and reporting back to communities.
- 2) **Ensure social inclusiveness of cities:** Cities represent the closest tier of government to citizens and can help ensure humanitarian and development actions adapted to them and to local specificities. Urban poverty and exclusion should be addressed through appropriate policies. These policies should contribute to prevent both the causes and effects of inequality, marginalisation and segregation, including tackling the needs of women, children and youth, as well as the needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups such as disabled people, displaced people and migrants. Their needs should also be included in urban planning processes, and translated into concrete actions on the ground. Examples of such actions include improved access to water and sanitation, innovations to foster increased safety and security, protection of human rights and personal welfare, access to independent and fair legal systems, and promotion of inclusive

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/statesoffragilityframework2018.htm>. The list of the 15 countries are available in Annex P.

employment and growth. The fight against inequality and marginalisation requests also integrated urban development actions, which include the use of culture as factor promoting aggregation and inclusiveness (e.g. cultural urban development in marginal areas and restauration of cultural heritage in historical urban centres).

- 3) **Improve resilience and greening of cities:** Promotion of a shift towards sustainable and green urban development. The trend towards an urban circular economy in developing-world cities should continue. This could increase the quality of life, foster urban green growth and make cities more resource-efficient through sustainable modes of production and consumption. Sustainable energy solutions are also a priority for many cities in developing countries, which have a major impact on surrounding ecosystems due to their firewood and charcoal consumption, also affecting overall urban air quality. It also contributes to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases from the use of fossil energy sources or low-efficiency technologies including for transport, decreasing pollution levels, reducing waste and making cities more resilient to climate change. Better management of urban biodiversity and protected peri-urban areas, especially in planning of urban expansion, will contribute to maintaining ecological connectivity and increase city dwellers' environmental awareness. Better accounting for natural capital, for example by means of payment mechanisms for ecosystem services, such as water funds, or greening of municipal taxes, are important drivers of sustainability.
- 4) **Improve prosperity and innovation in cities:** The EU supports cities as actors of open innovation. This means enabling interactions between people and organisations involved in the creation, design and implementation of integrated and innovative policy actions for urban and peri-urban areas. EU development cooperation aims to make cities more innovative to foster sustainable local economies and create employment. In this context, different urban realities offer opportunities for innovative and competitive solutions to societal and environmental problems: while the metropolitan areas and the big or mega-cities are the engines of the global economy, primary and secondary cities are hubs that drive regional or local growth. Providing enabling conditions for circular economy initiatives enhances opportunities to improve both the economic dynamism and the environmental sustainability of cities. Green public procurement can be a powerful incentive for this transition. Both public and private finance may be considered for investments in and maintaining of municipal infrastructure. Priority sectors of municipal infrastructure include: urban mobility and transport, water supply and sanitation, solid waste management, energy efficiency and renewable energy services.
- 5) **Strengthen institutional resilience<sup>6</sup> in context of fragility:** addressing fragility require tailoring differentiated approaches to fragile contexts and working across the full spectrum of issues, some of which are inherently difficult and sensitive<sup>7</sup>. In this call for proposals, “fragility” is considered from a governance perspective for instance on cases where the central state is weak or ineffective, failing to exercise its prerogative or to provide basic services to the population on its territory or a part of the territory. Local authorities could therefore play a key role to build or re-build foundations for peaceful and stable society, basis for an inclusive growth and a sustainable development and laying the foundations of participatory and accountable decision-making. Local authorities could also act as coordinators of actions carried out by other actors, such as public or semi-public body / agency (example: water distribution, waste management, etc.), universities and

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<sup>6</sup> According to the definition of the OCDE “resilience” refers to “The ability of households, communities and nations to absorb and recover from shocks, whilst positively adapting and transforming their structures and means for living in the face of long-term stresses, change and uncertainty”. This call for proposals focussed on a specific dimension of resilience on the institutional capacity of local authorities to positively absorb and recover from shocks, whilst adapting and transforming their structures and reinforce their capacities to face it.

<sup>7</sup> OCDE report “States of Fragility 2018” [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/states-of-fragility-2018\\_9789264302075-en?itemId=/content/publication/9789264302075-en&mimeType=text/html&\\_csp\\_=f05718374d7db8492bca650b796707e5&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/states-of-fragility-2018_9789264302075-en?itemId=/content/publication/9789264302075-en&mimeType=text/html&_csp_=f05718374d7db8492bca650b796707e5&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book)

research centres, civil society organisations or even local private sector, to unleash the potential of its territorial development.

### **Specific objectives by lot:**

#### **Lot 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**

The proposed actions under these lots must address:

- the specific objective (1) urban governance **and**
- at least one of the other specific objective: (2) social inclusiveness, (3) greening of cities, (4) prosperity and innovation.

#### **Specific objectives of Lot 6**

The proposed actions under this lot must address:

- the specific objective (1) urban governance **and**
- the specific objective (5) strengthen institutional resilience in context of fragility.

### **Priorities of this call for proposals :**

**For all lots, proposals must address the four priorities (all of them) of this call.**

Applicants must clearly indicate and explain how they address the following four priorities. This will be assessed under point 1.1 of the Concept Note evaluation grid. A proposal which does not clearly address all the priorities may be rejected on this sole basis.

- 1) Clearly demonstrate their contribution to the achievement of **SDG 11** “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”<sup>8</sup>.
- 2) Integrate in the activities the promotion of **peer-to-peer learning** and/or exchanges and/or short-term deployment of public officials at subnational level towards- twinning activities.
- 3) Promote **multi-stakeholders and multi-sectors approaches**.
- 4) Promote the EU development cooperation **Rights-Based Approach**, encompassing all human rights, including participation and access to the decision-making process, non-discrimination (including Gender Equality) and equal access, accountability and access to the rule of law and transparency and access to information.

### **Additional priorities:**

The integration in the proposed action of **at least one of the three additional priorities** will be considered as an added-value.

Applicants must clearly indicate which additional priority the proposed action is aiming at. Applications addressing additional priorities will receive a higher score under point 1.4 of the evaluation grid of the concept note.

- 1) **Triangular cooperation** involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more local authorities (LA) from two or more partner countries supported by a European LA to implement cooperation programmes and projects through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and

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<sup>8</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg11>



technical know-how. The three partners of the triangular cooperation must be represented in the partnership either as a lead applicant or as co-applicants, with the following specific roles:

- The **host** (the LA established in the country where the action takes place) identifies the need for the partnership, the development challenge to be addressed and the objectives to be achieved, and hosts and manages the partnership. The host is the **principal beneficiary of the partnership**. It is essential that the *host* is in charge of identifying its development needs, the focus of the partnership and the outcomes and impacts the partnership is expected to deliver.
- The **EU partner**, whose engagement in the partnership responds to needs identified by the host, provides technical assistance and policy expertise for the design, establishment and implementation of the partnership's activities. The role of the EU partner in Triangular Cooperation is an active one, bringing its expertise and experience to the partnerships so as to strengthen its effectiveness and impact.
- The **co-provider**, from the South<sup>9</sup>, who has specific technical expertise or experience on the development challenge identified by the host and a recognised track record of successfully addressing it within its own domestic context, which is sufficiently similar to that of the host to ensure the applicability and relevance of the experience and expertise. The co-provider is **not the main beneficiary** of the action. Its role is to assist the host in addressing its challenge<sup>10</sup>.

The host and the EU partner can be either the lead applicant or the co-applicant, while the co-provider can only be a co-applicant.

- 2) **Smart cities:** refers to the uses of information and communication technologies to increase cities' operational efficiency, share information with the public and improve both the quality of government services and citizen welfare.
- 3) **Job creation:** refers to the critical role of Local Authorities in fostering growth and employment as well as connecting their communities to global economic networks. Local authorities often have a role related to business regulations and their enforcement across at subnational level (their role become essential in processes such as e.g. starting a business, dealing with construction permits and land registration, getting electricity, registering of property, paying of taxes, enforcing contracts). Local authorities have also often a crucial role in providing transparent information to the public on business / property / land registries. Furthermore, the territorial approach to local development in which local authorities play a central coordinating role to unleashing the full economic and social potential of territories, including private sector, local civil society, communities, other resources, is essential.

### 1.3. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The overall indicative amount made available under this call for proposals is **EUR 111,550,000** and is specified in the corresponding Multi-Annual Action Programme 2019-2020.

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<sup>9</sup> As mentioned in the Annex L “list of eligible countries and territories”, developing countries, as included in the list of ODA recipients, which are members of the G20 group (Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, South-Africa, Turkey) can only be eligible if they are the beneficiary of the action. Therefore, these countries could only be involved in a triangular cooperation as “host” country (action location), but not as “co-provider”.

<sup>10</sup> The co-provider can participate in activities to support the host partner, or can organise training, workshop and studies tours in its own country to share its experience and knowledge with the host partner and European partner. Cost related to these activities can be covered by the action. Activities benefiting primarily the co-provider should not be foreseen.

The Contracting authority reserves the right not to award all available funds. Likewise, this amount could be increased should more funds become available.

### **Indicative allocation of funds by lot**

There will be 6 different lots under this call for proposals. The indicative allocations per lot are as follows:

#### **Lot 1: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Total available: EUR 40,000,000

#### **Lot 2: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Asia and the Pacific**

Total available: EUR 20,000,000

#### **Lot 3: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Latin America and the Caribbean**

Total available: EUR 20,000,000

#### **Lot 4: Partnerships for sustainable cities in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood**

Total available: EUR 18,000,000

#### **Lot 5: Partnerships for sustainable towns**

Total available: EUR 8,000,000

#### **Lot 6: Partnerships for sustainable cities in fragile countries**

Total available: EUR 5,500,000

If the allocation indicated for a specific lot cannot be used due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Contracting authority reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to (an)other lot(s).

### **Size of grants**

**Lot 1: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Lot 2: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Asia and the Pacific**

**Lot 3: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Lot 4: Partnerships for sustainable cities in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood**

Any EU requested contribution under the 4 geographic lots of this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 2,000,000
- maximum amount: EUR 5,000,000

Any EU requested contribution under the 4 geographic lots of this call for proposals may not exceed the following maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 50 % of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 95% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund<sup>11</sup>.

**Lot 5: Partnerships for sustainable towns**

**Lot 6: Partnerships for sustainable cities in fragile countries**

Any EU requested contribution for the 2 **horizontal** lots of this call for proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- minimum amount: EUR 500,000
- maximum amount: EUR 1,000,000

Any EU requested the 2 **horizontal** lots contribution under this call for proposals may not exceed the following maximum percentages of total eligible costs of the action:

- Minimum percentage: 50 % of the total eligible costs of the action.
- Maximum percentage: 95% of the total eligible costs of the action (see also section 2.1.5).

The balance (i.e. the difference between the total cost of the action and the amount requested from the Contracting authority) must be financed from sources other than the European Union Budget or the European Development Fund<sup>12</sup>.

**For lot 6 (only):**

The requested EU contribution may cover the entire eligible costs of the action if this is deemed essential to carry it out. If a full financing is requested (100%), the lead applicant must justify full financing in Section 2.1 of Part B of the grant application form. The validity of the justification provided will be examined during the evaluation procedure. The absence of any justification may lead to the rejection of the application.

If the evaluation committee considers that the justification is not valid, only the maximum percentage allowed (95%) will be accepted.

Please note that the lead applicant can either ask for a maximum co-financing of 95% or exceptionally of 100% (under the conditions described above). A percentage between 95.01% and 99.99% is not allowed and it will lead to the rejection of the application.

**For all lots:**

As per section 6.3.10. of the Practical Guide, **the grant must not give rise to profits for neither the Beneficiaries (Coordinator/lead applicant and co-beneficiaries/co-applicants) nor any affiliated entity** (in the context of this call, profit is defined as a surplus of the receipts over the eligible costs approved by the Contracting Authority when the request for payment of the balance is made). Expected revenue of the action may be accepted as co-financing. However, action revenues in excess of the total costs will be considered as profit. As such, it will need to be deducted when calculating the final amount of the EU grant.

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11 Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

12 Where a grant is financed by the European Development Fund, any mention of European Union financing must be understood as referring to European Development Fund financing.

## 2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

These guidelines set out the rules for the submission, selection and implementation of the actions financed under this call, in conformity with the practical guide, which is applicable to the present call (available on the internet at this address <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prag/document.do?locale=en>).<sup>13</sup>

### 2.1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria, relating to:

(1) the actors:

- The '**lead applicant**', i.e. the entity submitting the application form (2.1.1),
- its **co-applicant(s)** (where it is not specified otherwise the lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) are hereinafter jointly referred as 'applicant(s)') (2.1.1),
- and, if any, **affiliated entity(ies)** to the lead applicant and/or to a co-applicant(s). (2.1.2);

(2) the actions:

Actions for which a grant may be awarded (2.1.4);

(3) the costs:

- types of cost that may be taken into account in setting the amount of the grant (2.1.5).

#### ***2.1.1 Eligibility of applicants (i.e. lead applicant and co-applicant(s))***

#### **Lead applicant**

(1) In order to be eligible for a grant, the lead applicant must:

**Lot 1: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Sub-Saharan Africa**  
**Lot 2: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Asia and the Pacific**  
**Lot 3: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Latin America and the Caribbean**  
**Lot 4: Partnerships for sustainable cities in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood**

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be a Local Authority (LA)<sup>14</sup> **and**;

<sup>13</sup> Note that a lead applicant (i.e. a coordinator) whose pillars have been positively assessed by the European Commission and who is awarded a grant will not sign the standard grant contract published with these guidelines but a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. All references in these guidelines and other documents related to this call to the standard grant contract shall in this case be understood as referring to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement template.

<sup>14</sup> For the purpose of this call for proposals, the term «Local Authorities» refers to public institutions **with legal personality**, component of the State structure, below the level of central government and accountable to citizens. Local Authorities are usually composed of a deliberative or policymaking body (council or assembly) and an

- be established in<sup>15</sup> one of the following eligible countries or territories (Annex L):
  - a. EU Member States;
  - b. Developing countries and territories, as included in the list of ODA recipients published by the OECD-DAC ('list of ODA recipients'), which are not members of the G-20 group;
  - c. Developing countries, as included in the list of ODA recipients, which are members of the G-20 group, only when the country itself is the beneficiary of the action;
  - d. Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) covered by Council Decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union; **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

<b>Lot 5: Partnerships for sustainable towns</b>
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- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be a specific type of organisation such as:
  - Local Authority (LA)<sup>16</sup> with a population limited to maximum 150.000 inhabitants for European local authorities and to 300.000 inhabitants for Partner countries<sup>17</sup>; **or**
  - a national Association of Local Authorities (ALA) from the partner country benefiting from the action<sup>18</sup>; **or**
  - a national Association of Local Authorities (ALA) from a EU Member State; **or**
  - a regional Association of Local Authorities (ALA) , **or**
  - an International Association of Local Authorities.

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executive body (the Mayor or other executive officer), directly or indirectly elected or selected at local level. Local authorities encompass a large variety of sub-national levels and branches of government, i.e. municipalities, communities, districts, counties, provinces, regions etc

<sup>15</sup> To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

<sup>16</sup> For the purpose of this call for proposals, the term «Local Authorities» refers to public institutions with legal personality, component of the State structure, below the level of central government and accountable to citizens. Local Authorities are usually composed of a deliberative or policymaking body (council or assembly) and an executive body (the Mayor or other executive officer), directly or indirectly elected or selected at local level. Local authorities encompass a large variety of sub-national levels and branches of government, i.e. municipalities, communities, districts, counties, provinces, regions etc

<sup>17</sup> At the concept note step, lead applicants and co-applicants applying for lot 5 will have to provide an official document from their own administration stating the number of their inhabitants. This element will be checked when analysing the concept notes.

<sup>18</sup> For the list of partner countries that can benefit from the action, please refer to Annex M to the guidelines "eligible countries as action location".

- be established in<sup>19</sup> one of the following eligible countries or territories (Annex L):
  - e. EU Member States;
  - f. Developing countries and territories, as included in the list of ODA recipients published by the OECD-DAC ('list of ODA recipients'), which are not members of the G-20 group;
  - g. Developing countries, as included in the list of ODA recipients, which are members of the G-20 group, only when the country itself is the beneficiary of the action;
  - h. Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) covered by Council Decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union; and
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

<b>Lot 6: Partnerships for sustainable cities in fragile countries</b>
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- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be a specific type of organisation such as:
  - a Local Authority (LA)<sup>20</sup> **or**;
  - National Association of Local Authorities (ALA) from the partner country benefiting from the action<sup>21</sup>; **or**
  - National Association of Local Authorities (ALA) from EU Member States; **or**
  - Regional Association of Local Authorities (ALA); **or**
  - International Association of Local Authorities.
- be established in<sup>22</sup> one of the following eligible countries or territories (Annex L):

<sup>19</sup> To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of this call for proposals, the term «Local Authorities» refers to public institutions with legal personality, component of the State structure, below the level of central government and accountable to citizens. Local Authorities are usually composed of a deliberative or policymaking body (council or assembly) and an executive body (the Mayor or other executive officer), directly or indirectly elected or selected at local level. Local authorities encompass a large variety of sub-national levels and branches of government, i.e. municipalities, communities, districts, counties, provinces, regions etc

<sup>21</sup> For the list of partner countries that can benefit from the action, please refer to Annex M to the guidelines "eligible countries as action location".

<sup>22</sup> To be determined on the basis of the organisation's statutes, which should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of the country concerned and that its head office is located in an eligible country. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be

- i. EU Member States;
  - j. Developing countries and territories, as included in the list of ODA recipients published by the OECD-DAC ('list of ODA recipients'), which are not members of the G-20 group;
  - k. Developing countries, as included in the list of ODA recipients, which are members of the G-20 group, only when the country itself is the beneficiary of the action;
  - l. Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) covered by Council Decision 2013/755/EU of 25 November 2013 on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union; **and**
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary.

(2) Potential applicants may not participate in calls for proposals or be awarded grants if they are in any of the situations listed in section 2.6.10.1 of the Practical Guide.

Lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entities and, in case of legal entities, persons who have powers of representation, decision-making or control over the lead applicant, the co-applicants and the affiliated entities are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to Section 2.6.10.1 of the practical guide, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract.

In this respect, lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities are obliged to declare that they are not in one of the exclusion situations through a signed declaration on honour (PRAG Annex A14).

In Part A, Section 2 and Part B Section 5 of the grant application form ('declaration(s) by the lead applicant'), the lead applicant must declare that the lead applicant himself, the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies) are not in any of these situations.

**The lead applicant must act with co-applicant(s) as specified hereafter.**

If awarded the grant contract, the lead applicant will become the beneficiary identified as the Coordinator in Annex E3h1 (Special Conditions). The Coordinator is the main interlocutor of the Contracting authority. It represents and acts on behalf of any other co-beneficiary (if any) and coordinate the design and implementation of the action.

### **Co-applicant(s)**

**Under all lots, the lead applicant must act with at least one co-applicant as specified hereafter.**

**In the specific case of the triangular cooperation, a minimum of 2 co-applicants is requested. All actors of the triangular cooperation must be represented in the partnership, meaning lead applicant and at least 2 co-applicants.**

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considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a 'Memorandum of Understanding' has been concluded.

For lots 1 to 5, the partnership must include an entity (either the lead applicant or the co-applicant) established in a EU Member State as well as an entity (either the lead applicant or the co-applicant) established in the beneficiary country where the action will take place (see section 2.1.4 “Location”).

<p><b>Lot 1: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Sub-Saharan Africa</b> <b>Lot 2: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Asia and the Pacific</b> <b>Lot 3: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Latin America and the Caribbean</b> <b>Lot 4: Partnerships for sustainable cities in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood</b></p>
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Under lots 1 to 4, co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant of the corresponding lot and referred to in Section 2.1.1.

<p><b>Lot 5: Partnerships for sustainable towns</b> <b>Lot 6: Partnerships for sustainable cities in fragile countries</b></p>
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Under lot 5 and 6, co-applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant of the corresponding lot and referred to in Section 2.1.1.

Co-applicants participate in designing and implementing the action, and the costs they incur are eligible in the same way as those incurred by the lead applicant.

**Co-applicants must sign the mandate in Part B Section 4 of the grant application form.**

(3) Applicants included in the lists of EU restrictive measures (see Section 2.4. of the PRAG) at the moment of the award decision cannot be awarded the contract<sup>23</sup>.

If awarded the Grant contract, the co-applicants will become beneficiaries in the Action (together with the Coordinator).

Each proposal will have to clearly indicate the level of involvement and participation in the action of applicants (lead applicant, co-applicants) and affiliated entities. That will be evaluated in Section 4.3 of the evaluation grid of the full application.

**Please note that all information encoded in PROSPECT must be exhaustive and in line with the content of the concept note/full application. The administrative check will be performed taking into consideration only the information available in PROSPECT in sections 1 – ‘Contact’, 2 – ‘Project’ and 3 – ‘Co-applicants’. Please make sure that there are no inconsistencies between the information in PROSPECT and those in the concept note/full application text.**

**Complaints about administrative rejections related to this kind of inconsistencies will not be considered and will not lead to a modification of the decision.**

<h3><b><i>2.1.2 Affiliated entities</i></b></h3>
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The lead applicant and its co-applicant(s) may act with affiliated entity(ies).

**Only the following entities may be considered as affiliated entities to the lead applicant and/or to co-applicant(s):**

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<sup>23</sup> The updated lists of sanctions are available at [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu). Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevail



Only entities having a structural link with the applicants (i.e. the lead applicant or a co-applicant), in particular a legal or capital link.

This structural link encompasses mainly two notions:

- (i) Control, as defined in Directive 2013/34/EU on the annual financial statements, consolidated financial statements and related reports of certain types of undertakings:

Entities affiliated to an applicant may hence be:

- Entities directly or indirectly controlled by the applicant (daughter companies or first-tier subsidiaries). They may also be entities controlled by an entity controlled by the applicant (granddaughter companies or second-tier subsidiaries) and the same applies to further tiers of control;
  - Entities directly or indirectly controlling the applicant (parent companies). Likewise, they may be entities controlling an entity controlling the applicant;
  - Entities under the same direct or indirect control as the applicant (sister companies).
- (ii) Membership, i.e. the applicant is legally defined as a e.g. network, federation, association in which the proposed affiliated entities also participate or the applicant participates in the same entity (e.g. network, federation, association,...) as the proposed affiliated entities.

The structural link shall as a general rule be neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation. This means that the link would exist independently of the award of the grant; it should exist before the call for proposals and remain valid after the end of the action.

By way of exception, an entity may be considered as affiliated to an applicant even if it has a structural link specifically established for the sole purpose of the implementation of the action in the case of so-called 'sole applicants' or 'sole beneficiaries'. A sole applicant or a sole beneficiary is a legal entity formed by several entities (a group of entities) which together comply with the criteria for being awarded the grant. For example, an association is formed by its members.

#### What is not an affiliated entity?

The following are not considered entities affiliated to an applicant:

- Entities that have entered into a (procurement) contract or subcontract with an applicant, act as concessionaires or delegates for public services for an applicant,
- Entities that receive financial support from the applicant,
- Entities that cooperate on a regular basis with an applicant on the basis of a memorandum of understanding or share some assets,
- Entities that have signed a consortium agreement under the grant contract (unless this consortium agreement leads to the creation of a 'sole applicant' as described above).

#### How to verify the existence of the required link with an applicant?

The affiliation resulting from control may in particular be proved on the basis of the consolidated accounts of the group of entities the applicant and its proposed affiliates belong to.

The affiliation resulting from membership may in particular be proved on the basis of the statutes or equivalent act establishing the entity (network, federation, association) which the applicant constitutes or in which the applicant participates.

If the applicants are awarded a grant contract, their affiliated entity(ies) will not become beneficiary(ies) of the action and signatory(ies) of the grant contract. However, they will participate in the design and in the implementation of the action and the costs they incur (including those incurred for implementation

contracts and financial support to third parties) may be accepted as eligible costs, provided they comply with all the relevant rules already applicable to the beneficiary(ies) under the grant contract.

**For each lot, affiliated entity(ies) must satisfy the same eligibility criteria as the lead applicants or co-applicant(s).** They must sign the affiliated entity(ies) statement in Part B Section 5 of the grant application form.

Note that the fact of having a structural link with the lead applicant does not prevent an organisation from being co-applicant in the partnership. It is the lead applicant's decision to define the role of the actors composing its partnership and implementing the action: co-applicants or affiliated entities.

### ***2.1.3 Associates and contractors***

The following entities are not applicants nor affiliated entities and do not have to sign the 'mandate for co-applicant(s)' or 'affiliated entities' statement':

- **Associates**

Other organisations or individuals may be involved in the action. Such associates play a real role in the action but may not receive funding from the grant, with the exception of per diem or travel costs. **Associates do not have to meet the eligibility criteria referred to in Section 2.1.1.** Associates must be mentioned in Part B Section 6 — 'Associates participating in the action' — of the grant application form.

For instance, civil society organisations as well as universities/ research centres can apply as associates.

- **Contractors**

The beneficiaries and their affiliated entities are permitted to award contracts. Associates or affiliated entity(ies) cannot be also contractors in the project. Contractors are subject to the procurement rules set out in Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

### ***2.1.4 Eligible actions: actions for which an application may be made***

#### Definition:

An action is composed of a set of activities.

#### Duration

The initial planned duration of an action may not be lower than 24 months nor exceed 48 months.

#### Sectors or themes

Support to local authorities.

#### Location

Action must take place in **one of the eligible partner countries and territories** identified under each lot and listed in Annex M.

A restricted number of activities, if duly justified in the description of the action, might take place in a EU Member State or other partner countries (e.g. in case of triangular cooperation) if essential for the accomplishment of the objectives. These reasons will be examined during the evaluation process. These activities could include the organisation of workshops, seminars and dedicated events gathering multi-level of government stakeholders as well as the private sector, civil society and academia, for participatory technical and political dialogue. Upon specific requirements of targeted cities, business events to raise interest of potential investors as well as fora focussing on new technologies and innovative solutions at local level could also be envisaged.

Please note that only the main action location (beneficiary country) must be encoded in PROSPECT.

Activities can also target additional cities and territories of the same partner country, should the action aim at replicating, improving or expanding projects in areas of urban policy already carried out in cities or territories of the same country.

**Geographical balance could be taken into account by the European Commission at any stage of the technical evaluation.**

#### Types of action

To be eligible for co-financing, actions under this call must comply with the objectives and the priorities of this call for proposals described in section 1.2 of these guidelines. These actions shall also aim at reaching one or more of the expected results mentioned under the same section.

The objectives will be reached through:

- peer-to-peer activities,
- focussing on city-to-city and territory-to-territory cooperation among EU Member and partner country.

The following types of action are ineligible:

- actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- one-off conferences. Conferences may only be funded if they form part of a wider range of activities to be implemented over the time life of the action. For this purpose, preparatory activities for a conference and the publication of the proceedings of the conference do not in themselves, constitute such wider activities;
- actions intended to raise funds or promote the visibility of the applicant and its partner(s);
- actions consisting mainly of research or of study;
- actions, which consist exclusively, or primarily in capital expenditure, e.g. lands, buildings, equipment and vehicles.
- actions which discriminate against individuals or groups of people on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status;
- actions supporting directly political parties;
- actions which include proselytising activities.

#### Types of activity

Applicants are invited to present all activities they consider necessary in order to achieve the objectives of this call for proposals and to obtain tangible results in the context where the selected projects will be implemented.

For indicative purpose, the following non-exhaustive list of activities that may be financed under this call:

## **For lots 1 to 5:**

### **1/ Promote urban governance**

- Capacity building of public officials responsible for urban matters at sub national level.
- Supporting LAs to translate National Urban Policies into integrated urban planning, spatial planning and land use management, and to ensure the linkages between sustainable urban development, planning and resilience.
- Supporting LAs to improve institutional arrangements for city management.
- Elaborating / arrangements for consultation and cooperation among different stakeholders (government levels, private sector, academia, civil society organisations) in different areas of sustainable urban development.
- Improving or designing accountability mechanisms towards city dwellers and civil society.
- Support LA's to design action plans and projects improving municipal PFM and revenue generation systems.
- Trainings towards city/local administration representatives in urban governance methods and principles.

### **2/ Ensure social inclusiveness of cities**

- Improving and mainstreaming the integration of marginalised and vulnerable groups, including forcibly displaced persons and vulnerable migrants, while also addressing acute needs and leaving no one behind.
- Projects promoting urban systems which address the 'urban-planning gender gap' by responding to women's needs, including safety and security in urban public spaces.
- Pilot projects on basic services and network infrastructures, i.e. water, sanitation, waste (including recycling), energy (including efficiency) and public transport.
- Technical support to LAs for access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food in a wider context supporting functional rural-urban links.
- Projects in the field of integrated urban development targeting cultural heritage/cultural spaces in cities as factors to ensure inclusiveness.

### **3/ Resilience and greening of cities is improved**

- Improving environmental quality in cities and circular economy including climate change mitigation and adaptation and measures.
- Pilot projects to support the design and implementation of new environmental and climate resilient local public policies.
- Awareness raising on alternative modes of transport improving sustainable and low carbon urban mobility.
- Developing disaster preparedness and risks reduction interventions. Nature based solutions to disaster risk reduction (eco-DRR) will be promoted, especially when these also contribute to climate change adaptation.

### **4/ Prosperity and innovation in cities is improved**

- Trainings and grants to stimulate an enabling environment for the private sector, in particular local firms promoting inclusive and social enterprises
- Providing technical support to devise innovative and financial arrangements to finance large-scale sustainable infrastructure investment and maintenance.
- Pilot projects focussing on innovation to create employment and promote socially responsible entrepreneurship.

### **For lot 6:**

#### **Resilience in context of fragility is strengthened**

- Support LAs to improve institutional arrangements for city management in crisis or fragility situation.
- Elaborating /arrangements for consultation and cooperation with different stakeholders (government levels, private sector, academia, civil society organisations).
- Trainings towards city/local administration representatives in urban governance methods and principles.
- Exchange of experience with other local authorities in situation of fragility.
- Pilot activities aiming at improving basic services delivery by the local authorities.

#### **Activities and related costs to be included in all proposals at the full application step in both the budget and the description of the action:**

- 1) Participation (costs for travel and hotel) of two participants representing their partnership, ideally one from the beneficiary country and one from the European partner, once a year to the *Coordination Committee* meeting in Brussels.
- 2) **Expenditure verification:** requests for payment submitted by Beneficiaries must be accompanied by an expenditure verification report (see Annex VII to the standard grant contract).
- 3) **External final evaluation** of the proposed action.

Successful applicants could also be asked to cooperate with both support contracts of the Partnerships programme:

- ***Coordination support contract*** in charge of promoting knowledge sharing and capitalization of best practices, to increase visibility and to foster synergies among the partnerships, as well as to support DEVCO services to build in house knowledge about the partnership.
- ***Audio-visual communication support contract*** in charge of producing videos about the objectives and priorities of the Partnerships.

#### **Financial support to third parties<sup>24</sup>**

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<sup>24</sup> These third parties are neither affiliated entity(ies) nor associates nor contractors.

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties.

Applicants may propose financial support to third parties in order to help achieving the objectives of the action.

The maximum amount of financial support per third party is EUR 60 000.

**Under this call, financial support to third parties is not considered essential to achieve the objective of the action.**

In compliance with the present guidelines and notably of any conditions or restrictions in this Section, the lead applicant should define mandatorily in Section 2.1.1 of the grant application form:

- (i) the overall objectives, the specific objective(s) and the outputs<sup>25</sup> (i.e. results) to be achieved with the financial support,
- (ii) the different types of activities eligible for financial support, on the basis of a fixed list,
- (iii) the types of persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support,
- (iv) the criteria for selecting these entities and giving the financial support,
- (v) the criteria for determining the exact amount of financial support for each third entity, and
- (vi) the maximum amount which may be given,
- (vii) the set-up of the control system for verifying the eligibility of costs.

In all events, the mandatory conditions set above for giving financial support (points (i) to (vii)) have to be strictly defined in the grant contract as to avoid any exercise of discretion.

### Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed or co-financed the action. As far as possible, actions that are wholly or partially funded by the European Union must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the action and the EU support for the action in the country or region concerned, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-eu-external-actions_en)).

### Number of applications and grants per applicants / affiliated entities

- For lots 1 to 5, each applicant can only submit one proposal (either as lead applicant or as co-applicant/affiliated entity) under this call for proposals.
- For lot 6, each applicant can only submit one proposal (either as lead applicant or as co-applicant/affiliated entity) under this call for proposals.
- For the applicants who submit one proposal for lots 1 to 5 it is also possible to submit a second proposal for lot 6 (either as lead applicant or as co-applicant/affiliated entity) and vice-versa: the

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<sup>25</sup> As per OECD DAC definition, the term ‘results’ includes: ‘impact’ (overall objective), ‘outcome(s)’ (specific objective(s) and ‘output(s)’

applicants who submit one proposal for lot 6 can submit a second proposal for lots 1 to 5. This is the only case where an applicant can submit two proposals.

*Should an entity submit more than one application either for lots 1 to 5, or more than one for lot 6, only the first proposal arrived will be considered on the basis of submission date and hour. Any other application submitted by this entity will be rejected.*

**It is the responsibility of each lead applicant to verify that its co-applicants/affiliated entities are not involved in any other application under this call for proposals.**

### **2.1.5 Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included**

Only 'eligible costs' can be covered by a grant. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below. The budget is both a cost estimate and an overall ceiling for 'eligible costs'.

**Lot 1: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Sub-Saharan Africa**

**Lot 2: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Asia and the Pacific**

**Lot 3: Partnerships for sustainable cities in Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Lot 4: Partnerships for sustainable cities in the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood**

**Lot 5: Partnerships for sustainable towns**

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based on **actual costs incurred** by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies).

### **Lot 6: Partnerships for sustainable cities in fragile countries**

The reimbursement of eligible costs may be based **on:**

- **actual costs incurred** by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies)

or on

- one or more **simplified cost options**.

Simplified cost options may take the form of:

- **unit costs:** covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- **lump sums:** covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.
- **flat-rate financing:** covering specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by applying a percentage fixed ex ante.

The methods used to determine the amounts or rates of unit costs, lump sums or flat-rates must comply with the criteria established in Annex K, and especially ensure that the costs correspond fairly to the actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies) and affiliated entity(ies), are in line with their cost accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding (no double funding). Refer to Annex K for the details of the procedure to be followed depending on the type and amount of the costs to be declared as SCO.

Applicants proposing this form of reimbursement, must clearly indicate in worksheet no.1 of Annex B, each heading/item of eligible costs concerned by this type of financing, i.e. add the reference in capital

letters to 'UNIT COST' (per month/flight etc.), 'LUMPSUM', 'FLAT RATE' in the Unit column (see example in Annex K).

Additionally in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, 'Justification of the estimated costs' per each of the corresponding budget item or heading applicants must:

- describe the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs, lump sums and/or flat-rates, to which costs they refer, etc for output or result based SCO.
- clearly explain the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount for output or result based SCO<sup>26</sup>
- make reference to the previously obtained ex-ante assessment for other/recurrent SCOs.

In case of output or result based SCOs the evaluation committee and the contracting authority decide whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of grants carried out by the applicants or of similar actions. In case the evaluation committee and the contracting authority are not satisfied with the quality of the justification provided reimbursement on the basis of actually incurred costs is always possible.

No threshold is set ex-ante for the total amount of financing that can be authorised by the contracting authority on the basis of simplified cost options. Other/recurrent SCOs can be declared only if previously successfully ex-ante assessed.

Recommendations to award a grant are always subject to the condition that the checks preceding the signing of the grant contract do not reveal problems requiring changes to the budget (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic costs and ineligible costs). The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. It is not possible to increase the grant or the percentage of EU co-financing as a result of these corrections.

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

#### Eligible direct costs

To be eligible under this call for proposals, costs must comply with the provisions of Article 14 of the general conditions to the standard grant contract (see Annex G of the guidelines).

Salary costs of the personnel of national administrations may be eligible to the extent that they relate to the cost of activities which the relevant public authority would not carry out if the action were not undertaken.

#### Contingency reserve

The budget may include a contingency reserve not exceeding 5 % of the estimated direct eligible costs. It can only be used with the **prior written authorisation** of the contracting authority.

#### Eligible indirect costs

The indirect costs incurred in carrying out the action may be eligible for flat-rate funding, but the total must not exceed 7 % of the estimated total eligible direct costs. Indirect costs are eligible provided that they do not include costs assigned to another budget heading in the standard grant contract. The lead applicant may be asked to justify the percentage requested before the grant contract is signed. However, once the flat rate has been fixed in the special conditions of the grant contract, no supporting documents need to be provided.

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<sup>26</sup> Examples:- for staff costs: number of hours or days of work \* hourly or daily rate pre-set according to the category of personnel concerned;- for travel expenses: distance in km \* pre-set cost of transport per km; number of days \* daily allowance pre-set according to the country;- for specific costs arising from the organization of an event: number of participants at the event \* pre-set total cost per participant etc.



If any of the applicants or affiliated entity(ies) is in receipt of an operating grant financed by the EU, it may not claim indirect costs on its incurred costs within the proposed budget for the action.

### Contributions in kind

Contributions in kind mean the provision of goods or services to beneficiaries or affiliated entities free of charge by a third party. As contributions in kind do not involve any expenditure for beneficiaries or affiliated entities, they are normally not eligible costs.

As an exception, contributions in kind may include personnel costs for the work carried out by volunteers under an action or work programme (which are eligible costs).

Volunteers' work may comprise up to 50 % of the co-financing. For the purposes of calculating this percentage, contributions in kind in the form of volunteers' work must be based on the unit cost provided by the contracting authority. This type of costs must be presented separately from other eligible costs in the estimated budget. The value of the volunteer's work must always be excluded from the calculation of indirect costs.

When the estimated costs include volunteers' work, the grant shall not exceed the estimated eligible costs other than the costs for volunteers' work.

Other co-financing shall be based on estimates provided by the applicant.

**Notwithstanding the above under this call for proposals, contributions in kind may not be treated as co-financing.**

However, if the description of the action as proposed includes contributions in kind, the contributions have to be made.

### Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible:

- debts and debt service charges (interest);
- provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- costs declared by the beneficiary(ies) and financed by another action or work programme receiving a European Union (including through EDF) grant;
- purchases of land or buildings, except where necessary for the direct implementation of the action, in which case ownership must be transferred in accordance with Article 7.5 of the general conditions of the standard grant contract, at the latest at the end of the action;
- currency exchange losses;
- credit to third parties.

## **Ethics clauses and Code of Conduct**

### a) Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the contracting authority during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties according to the Financial Regulation in force.

### b) Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as

applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

**Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse:**

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

c) Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The European Commission reserves the right to suspend or cancel project financing if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract and if the contracting authority fails to take all appropriate measures to remedy the situation. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded with the contracting authority.

d) Unusual commercial expenses

Applications will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company which has every appearance of being a front company.

Grant beneficiaries found to have paid unusual commercial expenses on projects funded by the European Union are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated or to be permanently excluded from receiving EU/EDF funds.

e) Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The contracting authority reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the contracting authority may refrain from concluding the contract.

## 2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

To apply for this call for proposals the lead applicants need to:

- I. Provide information about the organisations involved in the action. Please note that the registration of this data in **PADOR is obligatory**<sup>27</sup> for this call for proposals:

**Concept note step:** Registration is obligatory for lead applicants applying for EU contributions of more than EUR 60 000.

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<sup>27</sup> Natural persons who apply for a grant (if so allowed in the guidelines for applicants) do not have to register in PADOR. In this case, the information included in PROSPECT and the grant application form is sufficient.

**Full application step:** Registration is obligatory for co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies). Lead applicants must make sure that their PADOR profile is up to date.

II. Provide information about the action in the documents listed under sections 2.2.2 (concept note) and 2.2.5 (full application). Please note that online submission via **PROSPECT is obligatory** for this call,

PADOR is an on-line database in which organisations register and update information concerning their entity. Organisations registered in PADOR get a unique ID (EuropeAid ID) which they **must mention** in their application. PADOR is accessible via the website: [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/pador\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/pador_en)

**It is strongly recommended to register in PADOR well in advance and not to wait until the last minute before the deadline to submit your application in PROSPECT.**

**Please note that once the ECAS account (EU Login) is created, the synchronisation/validation may take up to 24 hours before PADOR/PROSPECT recognize the user's ID and allow the access.**

If it is impossible to register online in PADOR for technical reasons, the applicants and/or affiliated entity(ies) must complete the 'PADOR off-line form'<sup>28</sup> attached to these guidelines. This form must be sent **together with the application**, by the submission deadline (see sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.5).

Before starting using PADOR and PROSPECT, please read the user guides available on the website. All technical questions related the use of these systems should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at [EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu) **via the online support form in PROSPECT.**

### **2.2.1 Concept note content**

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the concept note instructions in the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A).

Applicants must apply in **English, French, Spanish or Portuguese**. Applicants must apply in the language most commonly used by the target population in the country in which the action takes place.

Please note that:

1. In the concept note, lead applicants must only provide an estimate of the requested EU contribution as well as an indicative percentage of that contribution in relation to the eligible costs of the action. A detailed budget is to be submitted only by the lead applicants invited to submit a full application in the second phase.
2. The elements outlined in the concept note may not be modified in the full application.
  - The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20%. Lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines in Section 1.3.
  - The lead applicant may add, remove or replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one.
  - The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants.

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28 Which corresponds to sections 3 and 4 of the full application form – Annex A.2.

**An explanation/justification of the relevant replacements/adjustments shall be included in an accompanying letter or email. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the Evaluation Committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.**

Own contributions by the applicants can be replaced by other donors' contributions at any time.

3. Only the concept note form will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that this document contains ALL relevant information concerning the action. No additional annexes should be sent.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the concept note instructions may lead to the rejection of the concept note.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is not sufficient to conduct an objective assessment.

Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

### **2.2.2 Where and how to send concept notes**

The concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (**Annex A.1 section 2**) **must be submitted online via PROSPECT** <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect> following the instructions given in the PROSPECT user manual.

Upon submission of a concept note online, the lead applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in its PROSPECT profile.

If it is impossible for lead applicants to submit their concept note online via PROSPECT for technical reasons, they must send their proposal in a sealed envelope and attach the concept note together with the declaration by the lead applicant (**Annex A.1, section 2**). In particular, the lead applicant must send, in a sealed envelope as described below the following items:

- a) One original of the concept note. The signed declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.1 section 2) must be printed and stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.
- b) An electronic version (USB stick) of the items under point (a). The electronic file must contain **exactly the same** application as the paper version enclosed.

Please note that “**technical reasons**” should be understood **ONLY** in a situation when PROSPECT is not responding. Paper submission when PROSPECT is working may lead to the rejection of the application. The validity of the off-line submission will be examined by the Evaluation Committee.

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the lot number and title, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words ‘Not to be opened before the opening session’.

To reduce expense and waste, we strongly recommend that you do not use plastic folders or dividers. Please also use double-sided printing if possible.

Concept notes must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below. Where lead applicants send several concept notes (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately:

Postal address :

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit DEVCO B6 - Finance and Contracts  
Attn. Head of Unit

L-41 03/110  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
B-1140 Brussels  
BELGIUM  
Tel : +32 2 2997916

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit DEVCO B6 - Finance and Contracts  
Attn. Head of Unit  
L-41 03/110  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
B-1140 Brussels  
BELGIUM  
Tel : +32 2 299 79 16

Concept notes sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written concept notes will not be accepted.

**Please note that incomplete concept notes may be rejected.** Lead applicants are advised to verify that their concept note is complete by using the checklist for concept note (Annex A.1, Instructions).

All IT technical questions related to **PROSPECT** should be addressed to the PROSPECT helpdesk at:

[EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu)

### **2.2.3 Deadline for submission of concept notes**

The deadline for the submission of concept notes is **27/03/2020 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)**.

In order to convert this deadline to local time you can use any online time converter tool that takes into account timezones and winter/summer time changes (example available here)<sup>29</sup>. **The lead applicant is strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit** its concept note, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such aforementioned difficulties.

In the exceptional case of submission by post or by hand delivery (see section 2.2.2), the date of submission is evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is at **27/03/2020 at 12:00** as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt.

**Any concept note submitted after the deadline will be rejected.**

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may also reject any concept note sent in due time but received after the effective date of approval of the concept note evaluation (see indicative calendar under section 2.5.2).

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<sup>29</sup> For example: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.

## 2.2.4 Further information about concept notes

An information session on this call for proposals will be held on **17/02/2020 at 12:30**, at The External Cooperation INFOPOINT, 43 Rue de la Loi - 1040 Brussels, Belgium.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of concept notes to the address below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **europaaid-167744@ec.europa.eu**

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for submission of concept notes.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), an action or specific activities.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website of DG International Cooperation and Development: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europaaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>; as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at [EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu) **via the online support form in PROSPECT**: Please note that the working languages of the IT support are: English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

## 2.2.5 Full applications

Lead applicants invited to submit a full application following pre-selection of their concept note must do so using Part B of the grant application form annexed to these guidelines (Annex A). Lead applicants should then keep strictly to the format of the grant application form and fill in the paragraphs and pages in order.

The elements outlined in the concept note cannot be modified by the lead applicant in the full application:

- The EU contribution may not vary from the initial estimate by more than 20 %, although lead applicants are free to adapt the percentage of co-financing required within the minimum and maximum amount and percentages of co-financing, as laid down in these guidelines under Section 1.3.
- The lead applicant may add, remove, or replace a co-applicant or an affiliated entity only in duly justified cases (e.g. bankruptcy of initial co-applicant or affiliated entity). In this case the new co-applicant/affiliated entity must be of a similar nature as the initial one.
- The lead applicant may adjust the duration of the action if unforeseen circumstances outside the scope of the applicants have taken place following the submission of the concept note and require such adaptation (risk of action not being carried out). In such cases the duration must remain within the limits imposed by the guidelines for applicants.

**An explanation/justification of the relevant replacement/adjustment shall be included in an accompanying letter or email. Should the explanation/justification not be accepted by the Evaluation Committee, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis.**

Lead applicants must submit their full applications in the same language as their concept notes.

A copy of the lead applicant's accounts of the latest financial year (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed) must be uploaded in PADOR by the full application deadline. A copy of the latest account is neither required from the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).

Please complete the full application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Any error related to the points listed in the checklist (Part B, Section 7 of the grant application form) or any major inconsistency in the full application (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

Clarifications will only be requested when information provided is unclear and thus prevents the contracting authority from conducting an objective assessment.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the full application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (budget, logical framework) will be transmitted to the evaluators (and assessors, if used). It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain ALL the relevant information concerning the action.

**No additional annexes should be sent.**

#### **2.2.6 Where and how to send full applications**

Full applications forms together with the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant must be submitted online via PROSPECT <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/prospect> following the instructions given in the users' manual.

Upon submission of the full application online, the lead applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt in their PROSPECT profile.

If the lead applicant submitted the concept note online via PROSPECT but it is technically impossible for the organisation to submit the full application online:

In the above two cases the lead applicant must send by post the application, i.e the full application form, the budget, the logical framework and the declaration by the lead applicant. The lead applicant must send, in a sealed envelope as described below, the following items:

- a) One original signed copy of the full application form, the budget and the logical framework. The declaration by the lead applicant (Annex A.2, section 5) must be printed and stapled separately and enclosed in the envelope.
- b) An electronic version (USB stick) of the items under point (a). The electronic file must contain exactly the same application as the paper version enclosed.

To reduce expense and waste, we strongly recommend that you use only paper for your file (no plastic folders or dividers). Please also use double-sided printing if possible

Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) to the address below. Where lead applicants send several applications (if allowed to do so by the guidelines of the call), each one must be sent separately:

Postal address :

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit DEVCO B6 - Finance and Contracts  
Attn. Head of Unit  
L-41 03/110

Avenue du Bourget, 1  
B-1140 Brussels  
BELGIUM  
Tel : +32 2 2997916

Address for hand delivery or by private courier service:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit DEVCO B6 - Finance and Contracts  
Attn. Head of Unit  
L-41 03/110  
Avenue du Bourget, 1  
B-1140 Brussels  
BELGIUM  
Tel : +32 2 299 79 16

The envelope must bear the **reference number and the title of the call for proposals**, together with the number and title of the lot, the full name and address of the lead applicant, and the words ‘Not to be opened before the opening session’.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail) or delivered to other addresses will be rejected. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

**Please note that incomplete applications may be rejected.** Lead applicants are advised to verify that their application is complete using the checklist (Annex A.2, Instructions).

<b>2.2.7 <i>Deadline for submission of full applications</i></b>
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The deadline for the submission of full applications will be indicated in the letter sent to the lead applicants whose application has been pre-selected. This letter will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant.

**Lead applicants are strongly advised not to wait until the last day to submit their full applications**, since heavy Internet traffic or a fault with the Internet connection (including electricity failure, etc.) could lead to difficulties in submission. The Contacting Authority cannot be held responsible for any delay due to such afore-mentioned difficulties.

In the case of submission by post, (see section 2.2.6), the date of submission is evidenced by the date of dispatch, the postmark or the date of the deposit slip. In the case of hand-deliveries, the deadline for receipt is at **12:00**<sup>30</sup> as evidenced by the signed and dated receipt.

Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

However, for reasons of administrative efficiency, the Contracting Authority may also reject any full application sent in due time but received after the effective date of approval of the full application evaluation (see indicative calendar under section 2.5.2)

<b>2.2.8 <i>Further information about full applications</i></b>
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Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 21 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications to the addresses listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals:

E-mail address: **europaaid-167744@ec.europa.eu**

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

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<sup>30</sup> Please use an online time converter tool, such as <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>.



Replies will be given no later than 11 days before the deadline for the submission of full applications.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of lead applicants, co-applicants, affiliated entity(ies), or an action.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the website of DG International Cooperation and Development: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome> as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

All questions related to registration in PADOR or the online submission via PROSPECT should be addressed to the IT helpdesk at [EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EuropeAid-IT-support@ec.europa.eu) **via the online support form in PROSPECT**. Please note that the working languages of the IT support are: English French and Spanish. Therefore users are invited to send their questions in English, French or Spanish should they wish to benefit from an optimum response time.

## 2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the contracting authority with the possible assistance of external assessors. All applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed action does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in Section 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

### (1) STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND CONCEPT NOTE EVALUATION

During the opening and administrative check the following will be assessed:

- If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected.
- If the concept note satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist in Section 2 of Part A of the grant application form. This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The concept notes that pass this check will be evaluated on the relevance and design of the proposed action.

The concept notes will receive an overall score out of 50 using the breakdown in the evaluation grid below. The evaluation will also check on compliance with the instructions on how to complete the concept note, which can be found in Part A of the grant application form.

The evaluation criteria are divided into headings and subheadings. Each subheading will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

#### Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines	5

for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with ALL the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (section 1.2)?	
1.2. How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
1.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
1.4. Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices, additional priorities as described under section 1.2) ?	5
<b>2. Design of the action</b>	<b>30</b>
2.1. How coherent is the overall design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results?	5x2**
2.2. Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
2.3. Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?	5
2.4. Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results (including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?	5
2.5. To which extent does the proposal integrate relevant cross-cutting elements such as environmental/climate change issues, promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, needs of disabled people, rights of minorities and rights of indigenous peoples, youth, combating HIV/AIDS (if there is a strong prevalence in the target country/region)?	5
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>50</b>

\*\*this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Note: A score of 5 (very good) will only be allocated if the proposal specifically addresses more than the required minimum number of priorities as indicated in Section 1.2 (objectives of the programme) of these guidelines.

Once all concept notes have been assessed, a list will be drawn up with the proposed actions ranked according to their total score.

Firstly, only the concept notes with a score of at least 30 will be considered for pre-selection.

Secondly, the number of concept notes will be reduced, taking account of the ranking, to the number of concept notes whose total aggregate amount of requested contributions is equal to at least 200% of the available budget for this call for proposals. The amount of requested contributions of each concept note will be based on the indicative financial envelopes for each lot, where relevant.

Lead applicants will receive a letter indicating the reference number of their application and the respective results. This letter will automatically appear online in the PROSPECT profile of the lead applicant. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2), had to submit their application by post or hand-delivery will receive the letter by email or by post if no e-mail address was provided.

The pre-selected lead applicants will subsequently be invited to submit full applications.

## **(2) STEP 2: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND EVALUATION OF THE FULL APPLICATION**

Firstly, the following will be assessed:

- If the submission deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will automatically be rejected.
- If the full application satisfies all the criteria specified in the checklist (Section 7 of Part B of the grant application form). This includes also an assessment of the eligibility of the action. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The full applications that pass this check will be further evaluated on their quality, including the proposed budget and capacity of the applicants and affiliated entity(ies). They will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria in the evaluation grid below. There are two types of evaluation criteria: selection and award criteria.

**The selection criteria** help to evaluate the applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s operational capacity and the lead applicant's financial capacity and are used to verify that they:

- have stable and sufficient sources of finance to maintain their activity throughout the proposed action and, where appropriate, to participate in its funding (this only applies to lead applicants);
- have the management capacity, professional competencies and qualifications required to successfully complete the proposed action. This applies to applicants and any affiliated entity(ies).

For the purpose of the evaluation of the financial capacity, lead applicants must ensure that the relevant information and documents (i.e. accounts of the latest financial year and external audit report, where applicable) in their PADOR profile are up to date. If the information and documents in PADOR are outdated and do not allow for a proper evaluation of the financial capacity, the application may be rejected.

**The award criteria** help to evaluate the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives and priorities set forth in the guidelines, and to award grants to projects which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. They help to select applications which the contracting authority can be confident will comply with its objectives and priorities. They cover the relevance of the action, its consistency with the objectives of the call for proposals, quality, expected impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

*Scoring:*

The evaluation grid is divided into Sections and subsections. Each subsection will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

## Evaluation grid

Section	Maximum Score
<b>1. Financial and operational capacity</b>	<b>20</b>
1.1. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient in-house experience of project management?	5
1.2. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient technical in-house expertise (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)?	5
1.3. Do the applicants and, if applicable, their affiliated entity(ies) have sufficient management in-house capacity (including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the action)?	5
1.4. Does the lead applicant have stable and sufficient sources of finance?	5
<b>2. Relevance of the action</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the call for proposals and to the specific themes/sectors/areas or any other specific requirement stated in the guidelines for applicants? Are the expected results of the action aligned with the priorities defined in the guidelines for applicants (section 1.2)?	5
2.2. How relevant is the proposal to the particular needs and constraints of the target country(ies), region(s) and/or relevant sectors (including synergy with other development initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
2.3. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs (as rights holders and/or duty bearers) and constraints been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.4. Does the proposal contain particular added-value elements (e.g. innovation, best practices, additional priorities as described under section 1.2) ?	5
<b>3. Design of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1. How coherent is the design of the action? Does the proposal indicate the expected results to be achieved by the action? Does the intervention logic explain the rationale to achieve the expected results? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the envisaged outputs and outcome(s)?	5
3.2. Does the proposal/Logical Framework include credible baseline, targets and sources of verification? If not, is a baseline study foreseen (and is the study budgeted appropriately in the proposal)?	5
3.3. Does the design reflect a robust analysis of the problems involved, and the capacities of the relevant stakeholders?	5
<b>4. Implementation approach</b>	<b>15</b>
4.1. Is the action plan for implementing the action clear and feasible? Is the timeline realistic?	5
4.2. Does the proposal include an effective and efficient monitoring system? Is there an evaluation planned (previous, during or/and at the end of the implementation)?	5

4.3. Is the co-applicant(s)'s and affiliated entity(ies)'s level of involvement and participation in the action satisfactory?	5
<b>5. Sustainability of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1. Is the action likely to have a tangible impact on its target groups?	5
5.2. Is the action likely to have multiplier effects, including scope for replication, extension capitalisation on experience and knowledge sharing?	5
5.3. Are the expected results of the proposed action sustainable?  - Financially (e.g. financing of follow-up activities, sources of revenue for covering all future operating and maintenance costs)  - Institutionally (will structures allow the results of the action to be sustained at the end of the action? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the action?)  - At policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the action — e.g. improved legislation, codes of conduct, methods)  - Environmentally (if applicable) (will the action have a negative/positive environmental impact?)	5
<b>6. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the action</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1. Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
6.2. Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	5x2**
<b>Maximum total score</b>	<b>100</b>

If the total score for Section 1 (financial and operational capacity) is less than 12 points, the application will be rejected. If the score for at least one of the subsections under Section 1 is 1, the application will also be rejected.

If the lead applicant applies without co-applicants or affiliated entities the score for point 4.3 shall be 5 unless the involvement of co-applicants or affiliated entities is mandatory according to these guidelines for applicants.

#### *Provisional selection*

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up following the same criteria. This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

### **(3) STEP 3: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS AND AFFILIATED ENTITY(IES)**

The eligibility verification will be performed on the basis of the supporting documents requested by the contracting authority (see Section 2.4). It will by default only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available budget for this call for proposals.

- The declaration by the lead applicant (Section 8 of Part B of the grant application form) will be cross-checked with the supporting documents provided by the lead applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the declaration by the lead applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The eligibility of applicants and the affiliated entity(ies) will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best placed application on the reserve list that falls within the available budget for this call for proposals.

#### **2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS**

A lead applicant whose application has been provisionally selected or placed on the reserve list will be informed in writing by the contracting authority. It will be requested to supply the following documents in order to allow the contracting authority to verify the eligibility of the lead applicant, (if any) of the co-applicant(s) and (if any) of their affiliated entity(ies)<sup>31</sup>:

**Supporting documents must be provided through PADOR (see section 2.2).**

1. The statutes or articles of association of the lead applicant, (if any) of each co-applicant and (if any) of each affiliated entity<sup>32</sup>. Where the contracting authority has recognised the lead applicant's, or the co-applicant(s)'s, or their affiliated entity(ies)'s eligibility for another call for proposals under the same budget line within 2 years before the deadline for receipt of applications, it should be submitted, instead of the statutes or articles of association, a copy of the document proving their eligibility in a former call (e.g. a copy of the special conditions of a grant contract received during the reference period), unless a change in legal status has occurred in the meantime<sup>33</sup>. This obligation does not apply to international organisations which have signed a framework agreement with the European Commission.
2. For action grants exceeding EUR 750 000 and for operating grants above EUR 100 000, the lead applicant must provide an audit report produced by an approved external auditor where it is available, and always in cases where a statutory audit is required by EU or national law. That report shall certify the accounts for up to the last 3 financial years available. In all other cases, the applicant shall provide a self-declaration signed by its authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for up to the last 3 financial years available.

This requirement shall apply only to the first application made by a beneficiary to an authorising officer responsible in any one financial year.

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<sup>31</sup> No supporting document will be requested for applications for a grant not exceeding EUR 60 000.

<sup>32</sup> Where the lead applicant and/or a co-applicant(s) and or an affiliated entity(ies) is a public body created by a law, a copy of the said law must be provided.

<sup>33</sup> To be inserted only where the eligibility conditions have not changed from one call for proposals to the other.

3. The external audit report is not required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) or affiliated entities.
4. A copy of the lead applicant's latest accounts (the profit and loss account and the balance sheet for the last financial year for which the accounts have been closed)<sup>34</sup>. A copy of the latest account is neither required from (if any) the co-applicant(s) nor from (if any) affiliated entity(ies)).
5. Legal entity sheet (see Annex D of these guidelines) duly completed and signed by each of the applicants (i.e. by the lead applicant and (if any) by each co-applicant), accompanied by the justifying documents requested there. If the applicants have already signed a contract with the contracting authority, instead of the legal entity sheet and supporting documents, the legal entity number may be provided, unless a change in legal status occurred in the meantime.
6. A financial identification form of the lead applicant (not from co-applicant(s)) conforming to the model attached as Annex E of these guidelines, certified by the bank to which the payments will be made. This bank should be located in the country where the lead applicant is established. If the lead applicant has already submitted a financial identification form in the past for a contract where the European Commission was in charge of the payments and intends to use the same bank account, a copy of the previous financial identification form may be provided instead.
7. The lead applicant as well as all co-applicants and affiliated entities shall fill in and sign the declaration on honour certifying that they are not in one of the exclusion situations (see Section 2.6.10.1 of the PRAG).

The requested supporting documents (uploaded in PADOR or sent together with the PADOR offline form) must be supplied in the form of originals, photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

Where such documents are not in one of the official languages of the European Union, a translation into English, French, Spanish or Portuguese of the relevant parts of these documents proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, must be attached for the purpose of analysing the application.

Where these documents are in an official language of the European Union other than English, French, Spanish or Portuguese, it is **strongly** recommended, in order to facilitate the evaluation, to provide a translation of the relevant parts of the documents, proving the lead applicant's and, where applicable, co-applicants' and affiliated entity(ies)' eligibility, into English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.

**Applicants have to take into consideration the time necessary to obtain official documents from national competent authorities and to translate such documents in the authorised languages while registering their data in PADOR.**

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the lead applicant by the contracting authority, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the evaluation committee will make a final recommendation to the contracting authority, which will decide on the award of grants.

NB : In the eventuality that the contracting authority is not satisfied with the strength, solidity, and guarantee offered by the structural link between one of the applicants and its affiliated entity, it can require the submission of the missing documents allowing for its conversion into co-applicant. If all the missing documents for co-applicants are submitted, and provided all necessary eligibility criteria

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<sup>34</sup> This obligation does not apply to natural persons who have received a scholarship or that are in most need in receipt of direct support, nor to public bodies and to international organisations. It does not apply either when the accounts are in practice the same documents as the external audit report already provided pursuant to Section 2.4.2.

are fulfilled, the above mentioned entity becomes a co-applicant for all purposes. The lead applicant has to submit the application form revised accordingly.

## 2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION

### 2.5.1 *Content of the decision*

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the contracting authority's decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. This letter will be sent by e-mail and will appear online automatically in the PROSPECT profile of the user who submitted the application. Lead applicants who, in exceptional cases (see section 2.2), had to submit their application by post or hand-delivery, will be informed by email or by post if they did not provide any e-mail address. Therefore, please check regularly your PROSPECT profile, taking into account the indicative timetable below.

An applicant believing that it has been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may lodge a complaint. See further Section 2.4.15 of the practical guide.

Applicants who were unsuccessful at the **Opening and Administrative Check** stages of the procedure wishing to obtain further information should send their request by letter, indicating the reference of the Call for Proposals and the reference allocated to the proposal, to:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit DEVCO B6 – Finance and Contracts  
Attn. Head of Unit  
Office: L-41 03/110  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Applicants who were unsuccessful at the **Technical evaluation** stages of the procedure or at the **Eligibility check** stage wishing to obtain further information should send their request, by letter indicating the reference of the Call for Proposals and the reference allocated to the proposal, to:

European Commission  
Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development  
Unit DEVCO C5 – Cities, Local Authorities, Digitalisation, Infrastructures  
Attn. Head of Unit  
Office: L-41 08/163  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium



## 2.5.2 Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME
1. Information meeting (if any)	17/02/2020	12:30
2. Deadline for requesting any clarifications from the contracting authority	06/03/2020	-
3. Last date on which clarifications are issued by the contracting authority	16/03/2020	-
4. Deadline for submission of concept notes	27/03/2020	12:00
5. Information to lead applicants on opening, administrative checks and concept note evaluation (Step 1)	May 2020	-
6. Invitations to submit full applications	May 2020	-
7. Deadline for submission of full applications	June 2020	-
8. Information to lead applicants on the evaluation of the full applications (Step 2)	July 2020	-
9. Notification of award (after the eligibility check) (Step 3)	September 2020	-
10. Contract signature	October 2020	-

All times are in the time zone of the country of the contracting authority.

This indicative timetable refers to provisional dates (except for dates 2, 3, and 4) and may be updated by the contracting authority during the procedure. In such cases, the updated timetable will be published on the web site of DG International Cooperation and Development:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>.

## 2.6 CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AFTER THE CONTRACTING AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO AWARD A GRANT

Following the decision to award a grant, the beneficiary(ies) will be offered a contract based on the standard grant contract (see Annex G of these guidelines). By signing the application form (Annex A of these guidelines), the applicants agree, if awarded a grant, to accept the contractual conditions of the standard grant contract. Where the coordinator is an organisation whose pillars have been positively assessed, it will sign a contribution agreement based on the contribution agreement template. In this case references to provisions of the standard grant contract and its annexes shall not apply. References in these guidelines to the grant contract shall be understood as references to the relevant provisions of the contribution agreement .

### Implementation contracts

Where implementation of the action requires the beneficiary(ies) and its affiliated entity(ies) (if any) to award procurement contracts, those contracts must be awarded in accordance with Annex IV to the standard grant contract.

In this context, a distinction should be made between awarding implementation contracts and subcontracting parts of the action described in the proposal, i.e. the description of the action annexed to the grant contract , such subcontracting being subject to additional restrictions (see the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract ).

**Awarding implementation contracts:** implementation contracts relate to the acquisition by beneficiaries of routine services and/or necessary goods and equipment as part of their project management; they do not cover any outsourcing of tasks forming part of the action that are described in the proposal, i.e. in the description of the action annexed to the grant contract .

**Subcontracting:** Subcontracting is the implementation, by a third party with which one or more beneficiaries have concluded a procurement contract, of specific tasks forming part of the action as described in annex to the grant contract (see also the general terms and conditions in the model grant contract ).

### 3. LIST OF ANNEXES

#### DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- Annex A: Grant application form (Word format)  
Annex B: Budget (Excel format)  
Annex C: Logical framework (Excel format)  
Annex D: Legal entity sheet<sup>35</sup>  
Annex E: Financial identification form  
Annex F: PADOR registration form

#### DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION<sup>36</sup>

- Annex G: Standard grant contract
- Annex II: general conditions
  - Annex IV: contract award rules
  - Annex V: standard request for payment
  - Annex VI: model narrative and financial report
  - Annex VII: model report of factual findings and terms of reference for an expenditure verification of an EU financed grant contract for external action
  - Annex VIII: model financial guarantee
  - Annex IX: standard template for transfer of ownership of assets
- Annex H: Declaration on Honour
- Annex I: Daily allowance rates (per diem), available at the following address:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/about-procurement-contracts/procedures-and-practical-guide-prag/diems_en)
- Annex J: Information on the tax regime applicable to grant contracts signed under the call.
- Annex K: Guidelines for assessing simplified cost options.
- Annex L: List of countries and territories as referred to in Section 2.1.1
- Annex M: List of countries and territories as referred to in Section 2.1.4

#### Useful links:

##### Project Cycle Management Guidelines

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-vol-1_en)

##### The implementation of grant contracts

##### A Users' Guide

<http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/companion/document.do?nodeNumber=19&locale=en>

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<sup>35</sup> Only applicable where the European Commission will make the payments under the contracts to be signed.

<sup>36</sup> These documents should also be published by the contracting authority.

**Financial Toolkit**

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/procedures-beneficiary-countries-and-partners/financial-management-toolkit_en)

Please note: The toolkit is not part of the grant contract and has no legal value. It merely provides general guidance and may in some details differ from the signed grant contract. In order to ensure compliance with their contractual obligations beneficiaries should not exclusively rely on the toolkit but always consult their individual contract documents.

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